

# The News-Scimitar

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## TAX RATES AND POLITICS

Mayor Monteverde, A. D. Mason, his commissioner of streets, and C. B. Quinn, his Republican commissioner of police, who is now so busily engaged in reorganizing the police department, not on a basis of efficiency in the maintenance of law and order, but in politics, showed both a lack of taste and political acumen in their attack upon the motives of the tax rate committee. That committee was charged by the official heads of practically every business and uplift organization of Memphis with the duty of trying to avoid an unprecedented raise in city taxes, from \$1.80 to \$2.20, or 40 cents on the hundred dollars. It was composed of five men who have never taken part as partisans in any political campaign, nor had either chance or desire to profit from the results of any campaign, any more than any plain citizen is benefited or damaged by the government under which he lives. The general committee raised a fund for the necessary expenses of the investigation, and the special committee gave a month to making the investigation.

The report was free from politics. It laid blame upon past administrations for the fallacious policy of issuing bonds for temporary improvements, and gave the present administration credit for what good it is doing in increased collections of privilege taxes. The report bore on its face, as in the past or present actions of the committee, no suggestion at all of politics.

But the report did show plainly how, by lopping off some useless offices and getting a day's work for a day's pay, the people of Memphis can have for 1919 a good city government with a tax rate of \$2. This is 20 cents above the rate for 1918. The committee showed that this 20-cent increase, with the raise in assessed values over 1918 and the increase in pick-up taxes, and from other sources, would yield some \$500,000 more than the city spent in 1918.

The majority of the city commission came back with a Fourth of July oration attacking the motives of the committee, and trying to pick some immaterial flaws in its report. But the commission did not join the issue with the committee. It charged politics, but failed to show why three assistant city attorneys and a high-salaried claim agent were necessary, when two assistants easily could do the work of the legal department. It indulged in flowing rhetoric, but failed to show why the police judge could not easily perform also the duties of judge of the juvenile court. It dealt profusely with metaphors, but made no effort to justify the employment of close relatives of the three commissioners in various city offices.

No, gentlemen of the commission, it is you, and not the committee, who have injected politics into the question of tax rates.

## GREATEST BASTILLE CELEBRATION

Camille Desmoulins showed a great imagination when he sprang upon the table in the garden of the king's uncle, seized a leaf, pinned it on the lapel of his coat and started Paris toward the Bastille, but from that night until the day that he and Danton were hauled down together to Sanson, little did he dream that 130 years later the event would be celebrated in a manner to surpass anything yet seen by man.

The Bastille and Germany stood alike for autocratic power—for might over right. Both were surrounded, the one by walls of stone, the other by walls of military force and fortifications deemed impregnable to any attack. The Bastille fell to howling mobs and was razed. Germany fell to those whom she considered only a mob as compared with her perfect military organization. Both were in the way of the development of human thought, of human liberty, of the realization of human aspirations.

Poor Camille and the towering Danton did not live to taste the great fruits which grew in the orchards which were watered with the blood of so many heroes as well as mere men. Camille wept on the way to the guillotine, and again and again cried out to the crowds on the streets, "It is I, Camille Desmoulins, who started the revolution. Do you not know me?" in vain efforts to be rescued, but Danton, who had organized the national defenses, walked calmly up to the executioner, remarking, "When you cut my head off, hold it up for the crowd to see. It is a great head."

The movement that the one started and the other systematized went on, falling into hands once almost the equal in corruption and depravity of those now strangling Russia. But that could not stop the wave of progress. Napoleon rode the crest for two decades to a fall greater than that of William Hohenzollern. He fell, but in the few years that he dominated most of Europe there was more progress along all good lines than in any previous century. He fell and the wheels of human liberty were turned back for a round and checked for a cycle. But the idea of liberty could not be smothered. Those whom the Prussians saved at Waterloo had been inoculated, and conquered the Prussians on the same plains where human destinies have been changed so often in the past 2,000 years.

And we of today probably stand at the door opening upon as great an era of advancement as did Camille Desmoulins on July 14, 1789. His fertile imagination could not foresee what the human mind, unshackled from a dominating system, would evolve in the few years from his day to ours. Who can say what the genius of the new nations created by this upheaval and the loosening of thought in other nations will bring forth?

## DEAL WITH THEM

Some of the most conservative minds in the country are becoming apprehensive over the excessive cost of living, and some of them are predicting actual violence if some step is not taken to curb the excessive glut of the post-war profiteers.

If the situation were the result of economic conditions it might be adjusted by increased wages and a horizontal rise in all commodities to equal the price of necessities.

But from revelations produced by a slight investigation by the federal trade commission we are informed that four or five great industries control practically all of the foodstuffs in the country, and that they have gone into a combine to control the leather output and other essentials of life.

It is not reasonable to attempt an adjustment to fit an abnormal condition. The abnormal situation should be made to conform to natural conditions. It is not enough to say that there is no adequate law to fit the case. The law can always be found to cover a crime, and no greater crime was ever perpetrated against the American people than the cornering of foodstuffs that they must have, and which they will have one way or another.

# THE NEWS-SCIMITAR

Ain't It a Grand and Glorious Feelin'? By Briggs

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WHEN YOU'RE ABOUT 25 MILES FROM HOME ON A ROCKY ROAD AND RAIN IS COMING DOWN IN BUCKETS

AND YOU FIND THE ROAD CLOSED FOR REPAIRS AND THE DETOUR SIGN POINTS TO AN UNFREQUENTED AND MUDDY STRETCH

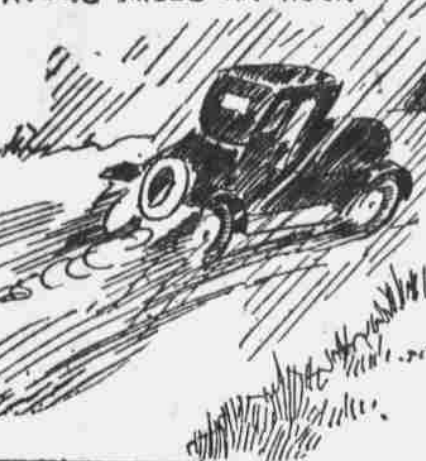
AND YOU LUMBER AND SKID ALONG AT ABOUT 10 MILES AN HOUR IN MUD TO THE HUBS



AND TO CAP THE CLIMAX AND ADD TO YOUR TROUBLES YOU HAVE A PUNCTURE

IF YOU FINALLY HIT A GOOD SMOOTH STRETCH OF MACADAM AND YOU HIT 'ER UP THE REST OF THE TRIP AT 40 MILES AN HOUR

AND YOU LAND SAFELY HOME TO THE ENJOYMENT OF A LITTLE OF THAT STOCK YOU LAID IN AND A GOOD CIGAR AND A GOOD MEAL



## Twice Told Tales

Ten Years Ago Today in Memphis.

JULY 15, 1909.

A thrilling sequel to the refusal of the board of education to re-elect I. C. McNell, superintendent, occurred when Judge John M. Steen, a member of the board was the victim in a flat encounter with Prof. McNell when they met in the Goodwyn Institute.

The committee at work raising funds for the procuring of the Normal school for Memphis reported at noon that they had \$18,184.

A terrific electrical storm swept over Memphis during the hour between 2:30 and 4:30 a. m. In less than an hour the thermometer dropped nearly 20 degrees, reaching the minimum of 68. The wind reached a velocity of 48 miles an hour and a half-inch rain fell in less than 10 minutes.

The British submarine C-11 was sunk by being struck by the cargo steamer Edson near Cranoe Cove, Va. again, Third and Glasgow.

Dr. B. G. Henning made his friends happy by announcing that the rumors he was to resign as a member of the police and fire commission were entirely false.

Otto Schemmel, 10 years old, son of Paul Schemmel, of Little Rock, Ark., died at the home of his grandmother on Kerr avenue.

St. Louis police were searching the Mississippi river in an effort to locate the body of Clifford Cary, 18 years old, of Memphis, who in a letter dropped on a prominent street corner there, indicated that he contemplated suicide by drowning in the big river.

Burglars made their way into the Brinley-Hardy store, 104-106, South Front street, broke open the big safe, stole about \$10 and set fire to the set of books and valuable papers in the vault. The blaze was discovered in time and firemen from the headquarters station, a short distance away, saved the bigger part of the books.

QUIT POSTOFFICE. BLUE MOUNTAIN, Miss., July 15. (Sp.)—I. Quintan Hardin, who, for some years, has acted as assistant postmaster at this place, has just retired from the local postoffice, and after a vacation of a few days in the country, will return to his former employment as a salesman in one of the leading business houses of Blue Mountain.

PLANT INCREASES FORCE. JACKSON, Tenn., July 15. (Sp.)—Due to the fact that the Southern Engine and Boiler Works, the largest plant of its kind in the South, is getting orders from Europe as well as from the Texas oil fields, it has been necessary to add 75 boilermakers and machinists and to provide for three shifts of workmen every 24 hours. The concern has a number of boiler orders from Spain and Holland which must be filled in short order.

STORMS FORCE BALLOONS TO LOSE TEST ATTEMPT. OMAHA, Neb., July 15.—Fighting all night with thunderstorms over Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin, all four of the heavy balloons which left Fort Omaha Sunday evening in an attempt to set a new record, for both height and distance, were forced to land today morning, their instruments put out of commission by electrical disturbances and their ballast exhausted. No new records were established.

PRIMA FACIE EVIDENCE. Owsboro, N. J., July 15.—Overstated of evidence in the North. Loading at Monroe and Main; Also Winchester and Front; Yagasin, Third and Glasgow; Oh, well, Calhoun and Rayburn Blvd. but—Why multiply?

## PRESIDENT MAY ATTEND REUNION OF THIRTIETH

WASHINGTON, July 15. (Sp.)—President Wilson has tentatively accepted the invitation to attend the first reunion of the 30th division which will be held at Greenville, S. C., on Sept. 20. The invitation was presented to the president by Senators Smith and Dial, of South Carolina, and while President Wilson replied he could not make a positive engagement this far in advance he gave assurances that if no important business intervened he would accept.

DANCER'S SISTER FIRST REFUGEE ASKING AID. NEW YORK, July 15.—The first refugee to be received at the Y. W. C. A. service center in Constantinople, which was opened last week, was a sister of Anna Pavlova, the Russian dancer, according to a cable message made public here by the Y. W. C. A. war work council.

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## THE WONDERFUL STORIES OF

By L. Frank Baum

The Girl in the Chicken Coop

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# The Public Be Served

## On the Spur of the Moment

by Roy K. Moulton

On a New York Central train a short time ago one of those old "boys" who